

AMENDED IN SENATE SEPTEMBER 4, 2015

AMENDED IN SENATE AUGUST 27, 2015

AMENDED IN SENATE AUGUST 20, 2015

AMENDED IN SENATE JULY 14, 2015

AMENDED IN SENATE JUNE 24, 2015

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 27, 2015

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 20, 2015

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

## **ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 921**

---

---

**Introduced by Assembly Member Jones**

February 26, 2015

---

---

An act to amend Sections 7525.1, 7541, and 7541.1 of, and to add Sections 7519.1, 7519.2, 7519.3, and 7519.4 to, the Business and Professions Code, relating to private investigators.

### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 921, as amended, Jones. Private investigators: Disciplinary Review Committee: licensure.

The Private Investigator Act provides for the licensure and regulation of private investigators by the Bureau of Security and Investigative Services within the Department of Consumer Affairs and requires the Director of Consumer Affairs to administer and enforce the act. The act authorizes the director to deny, suspend, or revoke a license if the director determines, among other things, that any provision of the act was violated by the licensee. The act also authorizes the director to

impose a civil penalty of no greater than \$500 instead of suspending or revoking a license issued under the act for the violation of specified provisions if the director determines that the imposition of the civil penalty better serves the purposes of the act. The act requires an application for a license to be verified and include certain information, including, but not limited to, the full name and business address of the applicant.

This bill would require the Governor to appoint a Private Investigator Disciplinary Review Committee, and would authorize the Governor to remove any member of the committee for misconduct, incompetency, or neglect of duty. The bill would require the committee to consist of 3 members actively engaged in the business of a licensed private investigator and 2 public members and would require members to be appointed for a term of 4 years. The bill would require the committee to meet every 60 days or more or less frequently as may be required, and would require that the members be paid per diem and be reimbursed for actual travel expenses. The bill would require the committee to perform certain functions, including affirming, rescinding, or modifying ~~all appealed~~ decisions concerning administrative ~~fin~~~~es~~, *fin*~~es~~ or the denial, suspension, or revocation of licenses *that are appealed to the committee*, as specified. The bill would authorize the committee to grant a probationary ~~license, certificate, registration, or permit~~ *license* with respect to appealed decisions, as specified. The bill would authorize a person licensed under the act to appeal the assessment of an administrative fine to the committee, and would authorize a person denied, suspended of, or revoked of a license to appeal to the committee, except as specified, if the appeal is in writing and made within 30 days of the assessment of the fine or denial, suspension, or revocation of the license. The bill would require the committee to notify the appellant in writing, by regular mail, of the committee's decision within 30 days of that decision. The bill would also authorize the appellant to request a hearing, as specified, if, among other things, the appellant disagrees with the committee's decision regarding the appeal. The bill would require that all evidence used by the bureau be provided to the committee prior to hearing an appeal. The bill would make the above provisions operative on July 1, 2017.

This bill would also authorize an applicant to, at his or her discretion, include a valid email address on the application.

Existing law requires an applicant, or his or her manager, for a license as a private investigator to have had at least 3 years' experience in

investigation work. Existing law requires an applicant to substantiate the claimed years of qualifying experience and the exact details as to the character and nature thereof by written certifications from the employer, subject to independent verification by the Director of Consumer Affairs as he or she may determine. Under existing law, the business of each licensee is required to be operated under the active direction, control, charge, or management, in this state, of the licensee, if he or she is qualified, or the person who is qualified to act as the licensee's manager, if the licensee is not qualified. Existing law prohibits a person from acting as a qualified manager of a licensee until he or she has complied with certain requirements.

This bill would additionally authorize that written certification to be from a qualified manager, as specified.

Existing law requires experience for purposes of taking the examination for licensure as a private investigator to be limited to those activities actually performed in connection with investigations, as defined, and only if those activities are performed by persons who are employed in certain specified capacities.

This bill would additionally authorize such activities to be performed by persons who are managed, as specified, in those capacities.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.  
State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

- 1 SECTION 1. Section 7519.1 is added to the Business and
- 2 Professions Code, immediately following Section 7519, to read:
- 3 7519.1. (a) The Governor shall appoint a Private Investigator
- 4 Disciplinary Review Committee, and may remove any member of
- 5 the committee for misconduct, incompetency, or neglect of duty.
- 6 (b) The committee shall consist of three members actively
- 7 engaged in the business of a licensed private investigator and two
- 8 public members. The public members shall not be licensees or
- 9 registrants, or engage in any business or profession in which any
- 10 part of the fees, compensation, or revenue thereof, is derived from
- 11 any licensee.
- 12 (c) The committee shall meet every 60 days or more or less
- 13 frequently as may be required. The members shall be paid per diem
- 14 pursuant to Section 103 and shall be reimbursed for actual travel
- 15 expenses. The members shall be appointed for a term of four years.

(d) This section shall become operative on July 1, 2017.

SEC. 2. Section 7519.2 is added to the Business and Professions Code, to read:

7519.2. (a) The Private Investigator Disciplinary Review Committee shall perform the following functions:

(1) Affirm, rescind, or modify all ~~appealed~~ decisions concerning administrative fines assessed by the bureau against private ~~investigators~~; *investigators that are appealed to the committee.*

(2) Affirm, rescind, or modify all ~~appealed~~ decisions concerning denial, suspension, or revocation of ~~licenses, and certificates, registrations, licenses~~ or permits issued by the bureau, except denials, suspensions, or revocations ordered by the director in accordance with Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 11500) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government ~~Code~~; *Code that are appealed to the committee.*

(b) The committee may grant a probationary ~~license, certificate, registration, or permit~~ *license* with respect to the appealed decisions described in subdivision (a).

(c) This section shall become operative on July 1, 2017.

SEC. 3. Section 7519.3 is added to the Business and Professions Code, to read:

7519.3. (a) (1) A person licensed with the department under this chapter may appeal the assessment of an administrative fine to the Private Investigator Disciplinary Review Committee. A person denied, suspended of, or revoked of a license under this chapter may appeal to the committee, unless the denial, suspension, or revocation of the license is ordered by the director in accordance with Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 11500) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

(2) A request for an appeal to the committee shall be made in a written notice to the department within 30 days of the assessment of an administrative fine or denial, suspension, or revocation of a license.

(3) Following review by the committee of the appeal, the appellant shall be notified in writing, by regular mail, within 30 days of the committee's decision on the appeal.

(4) If the appellant disagrees with the decision made by the committee, the appellant may request a hearing as described in subdivision (b). A request for a hearing following a decision by

1 the committee shall be made by written notice to the department  
2 within 30 days following notice of the committee's decision.

3 (5) If the appellant does not request a hearing within those 30  
4 days, the committee's decision shall become final.

5 (b) (1) A person licensed with the department under this chapter  
6 may request a hearing in accordance with Chapter 5 (commencing  
7 with Section 11500) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the  
8 Government Code if he or she contests an assessment of an  
9 administrative fine, or to appeal a denial, suspension, or revocation  
10 of a license. A hearing may also be requested, if the appellant  
11 disagrees with the decision made by the committee.

12 (2) A request for a hearing shall be made by written notice to  
13 the department within 30 days following the issuance of the  
14 decision by the committee. A hearing pursuant to this subdivision  
15 shall be available only after a review by the committee.

16 (c) This section shall become operative on July 1, 2017.

17 SEC. 4. Section 7519.4 is added to the Business and Professions  
18 Code, to read:

19 7519.4. (a) The Private Investigator Disciplinary Review  
20 Committee shall be provided all evidence used by the bureau in  
21 reaching its decision prior to hearing an appeal.

22 (b) This section shall become operative on July 1, 2017.

23 SEC. 5. Section 7525.1 of the Business and Professions Code,  
24 as amended by Section 4 of Chapter 669 of the Statutes of 2014,  
25 is amended to read:

26 7525.1. An application shall be verified and shall include:

27 (a) The full name and business address of the applicant.

28 (b) The name under which the applicant intends to do business.

29 (c) A statement as to the general nature of the business in which  
30 the applicant intends to engage.

31 (d) A verified statement of his or her experience qualifications.

32 (e) (1) If the applicant is an individual, a qualified manager, a  
33 partner of a partnership, an officer of a corporation designated in  
34 subdivision (h), or a managing member of a limited liability  
35 company designated in subdivision (i), one personal identification  
36 form provided by the bureau upon which shall appear a photograph  
37 taken within one year immediately preceding the date of the filing  
38 of the application together with two legible sets of fingerprints,  
39 one set of which shall be forwarded to the Federal Bureau of  
40 Investigation for purposes of a background check, on a form

1 approved by the Department of Justice, and a personal description  
2 of each person, respectively. The identification form shall include  
3 residence addresses and employment history for the previous five  
4 years and be signed under penalty of perjury.

5 (2) The bureau may impose a fee not to exceed three dollars  
6 (\$3) for processing classifiable fingerprint cards submitted by  
7 applicants, excluding those submitted into an electronic fingerprint  
8 system using electronic fingerprint technology.

9 (f) In addition, if the applicant for a license is an individual, the  
10 application shall list all other names known as or used during the  
11 past 10 years and shall state that the applicant is to be personally  
12 and actively in charge of the business for which the license is  
13 sought. If any other qualified manager is to be actively in charge  
14 of the business, the application shall be subscribed, verified, and  
15 signed by the applicant, under penalty of perjury. If any other  
16 person is to be actively in charge of the business, the application  
17 shall also be subscribed, verified, and signed by that person under  
18 penalty of perjury.

19 (g) If the applicants for a license are copartners, the application  
20 shall state the true names and addresses of all partners and the  
21 name of the partner to be actively in charge of the business for  
22 which the license is sought and list all other names known as or  
23 used during the past 10 years. If a qualified manager other than a  
24 partner is to be actively in charge of the business, then the  
25 application shall be subscribed, verified, and signed by all of the  
26 partners under penalty of perjury. If any other person is to be  
27 actively in charge of the business, the application shall also be  
28 subscribed, verified, and signed by that person, under penalty of  
29 perjury, under penalty of perjury by all of the partners and the  
30 qualified manager, or by all of the partners or the qualified  
31 manager.

32 (h) If the applicant for a license is a corporation, the application  
33 shall state the true names and complete residence addresses of the  
34 chief executive officer, secretary, chief financial officer, and any  
35 other corporate officer who will be active in the business to be  
36 licensed. The application shall also state the name and address of  
37 the designated person to be actively in charge of the business for  
38 which the license is sought. The application shall be subscribed,  
39 verified, and signed by a duly authorized officer of the applicant  
40 and by the qualified manager thereof, under penalty of perjury.

1 (i) If the applicant for a license is a limited liability company,  
2 the application shall state the true name and complete residence  
3 address of each managing member and any other officer or member  
4 who will be active in the business to be licensed. A copy of the  
5 most recent articles of organization, as filed by the Secretary of  
6 State, shall be supplied to the bureau upon request. The application  
7 shall also state the name and residence address of the designated  
8 person to be actively in charge of the business for which the license  
9 is sought. The application shall be subscribed, verified, and signed  
10 by a duly authorized member of the applicant under penalty of  
11 perjury.

12 (j) Any other information, evidence, statements, or documents  
13 as may be required by the director.

14 (k) At the discretion of the applicant, a valid email address.

15 (l) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2018,  
16 and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that  
17 is enacted before January 1, 2018, deletes or extends that date.

18 SEC. 6. Section 7525.1 of the Business and Professions Code,  
19 as added by Section 5 of Chapter 669 of the Statutes of 2014, is  
20 amended to read:

21 7525.1. An application shall be verified and shall include:

- 22 (a) The full name and business address of the applicant.  
23 (b) The name under which the applicant intends to do business.  
24 (c) A statement as to the general nature of the business in which  
25 the applicant intends to engage.  
26 (d) A verified statement of his or her experience qualifications.  
27 (e) (1) If the applicant is an individual, a qualified manager, a  
28 partner of a partnership, or an officer of a corporation designated  
29 in subdivision (h), one personal identification form provided by  
30 the bureau upon which shall appear a photograph taken within one  
31 year immediately preceding the date of the filing of the application  
32 together with two legible sets of fingerprints, one set of which  
33 shall be forwarded to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for  
34 purposes of a background check, on a form approved by the  
35 Department of Justice, and a personal description of each person,  
36 respectively. The identification form shall include residence  
37 addresses and employment history for the previous five years and  
38 be signed under penalty of perjury.

39 (2) The bureau may impose a fee not to exceed three dollars  
40 (\$3) for processing classifiable fingerprint cards submitted by

1 applicants, excluding those submitted into an electronic fingerprint  
2 system using electronic fingerprint technology.

3 (f) In addition, if the applicant for a license is an individual, the  
4 application shall list all other names known as or used during the  
5 past 10 years and shall state that the applicant is to be personally  
6 and actively in charge of the business for which the license is  
7 sought. If any other qualified manager is to be actively in charge  
8 of the business, the application shall be subscribed, verified, and  
9 signed by the applicant, under penalty of perjury. If any other  
10 person is to be actively in charge of the business, the application  
11 shall also be subscribed, verified, and signed by that person under  
12 penalty of perjury.

13 (g) If the applicants for a license are copartners, the application  
14 shall state the true names and addresses of all partners and the  
15 name of the partner to be actively in charge of the business for  
16 which the license is sought and list all other names known as or  
17 used during the past 10 years. If a qualified manager other than a  
18 partner is to be actively in charge of the business, then the  
19 application shall be subscribed, verified, and signed by all of the  
20 partners under penalty of perjury. If any other person is to be  
21 actively in charge of the business, the application shall also be  
22 subscribed, verified, and signed under penalty of perjury by that  
23 person, by all of the partners and the qualified manager, or by all  
24 of the partners or the qualified manager.

25 (h) If the applicant for a license is a corporation, the application  
26 shall state the true names and complete residence addresses of the  
27 chief executive officer, secretary, chief financial officer, and any  
28 other corporate officer who will be active in the business to be  
29 licensed. The application shall also state the name and address of  
30 the designated person to be actively in charge of the business for  
31 which the license is sought. The application shall be subscribed,  
32 verified, and signed by a duly authorized officer of the applicant  
33 and by the qualified manager thereof, under penalty of perjury.

34 (i) Any other information, evidence, statements, or documents  
35 as may be required by the director.

36 (j) At the discretion of the applicant, a valid email address.

37 (k) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2018.

38 SEC. 7. Section 7541 of the Business and Professions Code is  
39 amended to read:



1     7541. Except as otherwise provided by this section, an  
2 applicant, or his or her manager, for a license as a private  
3 investigator shall have had at least three years' experience in  
4 investigation work.

5     A year's experience shall consist of not less than 2,000 hours of  
6 actual compensated work performed by each applicant preceding  
7 the filing of an application.

8     An applicant who holds a law degree or who has completed a  
9 four-year course in police science, criminal justice, criminal law,  
10 or the equivalent thereof shall be required to have had two years'  
11 experience in investigation work.

12     An applicant shall substantiate the claimed years of qualifying  
13 experience and the exact details as to the character and nature  
14 thereof by written certifications from the employer or qualified  
15 manager, subject to independent verification by the director as he  
16 or she may determine.

17     Notwithstanding any other law, only an employer, qualified  
18 manager, or his or her designated agent may certify experience for  
19 purposes of this section. For purposes of this section, the term  
20 "employer" shall mean only those persons, corporations,  
21 partnerships, proprietorships, or other associations which, in the  
22 employ of the designated individual, regularly and routinely  
23 withheld income taxes and other payroll deductions for direct  
24 forwarding to governmental taxing authorities. For the purposes  
25 of this section, the term "qualified manager" shall mean only a  
26 manager who has qualified pursuant to Section 7536 and who has  
27 directly overseen the work and experience of the applicant.

28     An employer who is a licensee or qualified manager shall  
29 respond in writing within 30 days to an applicant's written request  
30 for certifications of the applicant's work experience as an employee  
31 and either provide the certifications or the reasons for denial. If  
32 the applicant notifies the director in writing, under penalty of  
33 perjury, that the applicant is unable to obtain the required written  
34 response from a licensee or provides the licensee's written denial  
35 and states, under penalty of perjury, that the licensee's reasons for  
36 denial are invalid or insufficient and the director concurs, the  
37 director may require the licensee to provide the bureau with all  
38 relevant employment records maintained pursuant to Section  
39 7531.5 regarding the applicant for evaluation in substantiating the  
40 applicant's employment experience.

SEC. 8. Section 7541.1 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

7541.1. (a) Notwithstanding any other law, experience for purposes of taking the examination for licensure as a private investigator shall be limited to those activities actually performed in connection with investigations, as defined in Section 7521, and only if those activities are performed by persons who are employed or managed in the following capacities:

(1) Sworn law enforcement officers possessing powers of arrest and employed by agencies in the federal, state, or local government.

(2) Military police of the armed forces of the United States or the National Guard.

(3) An insurance adjuster or their employees subject to Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 14000) of Division 5 of the Insurance Code.

(4) Persons employed by a private investigator who are duly licensed in accordance with this chapter, or managed by a qualified manager in accordance with Section 7536.

(5) Persons employed by reposseors duly licensed in accordance with Chapter 11 (commencing with Section 7500), only to the extent that those persons are routinely and regularly engaged in the location of debtors or the location of personal property utilizing methods commonly known as "skip tracing." For purposes of this section, only that experience acquired in that skip tracing shall be credited toward qualification to take the examination.

(6) Persons duly trained and certified as an arson investigator and employed by a public agency engaged in fire suppression.

(7) Persons trained as investigators and employed by a public defender to conduct investigations.

(b) For purposes of Section 7541, persons possessing an associate of arts degree in police science, criminal law or justice from an accredited college shall be credited with 1,000 hours of experience in investigative activities.

(c) The following activities shall not be deemed to constitute acts of investigation for purposes of experience toward licensure:

(1) The serving of legal process or other documents.

(2) Activities relating to the search for heirs or similar searches which involve only a search of public records or other reference sources in the public domain.

1     (3) The transportation or custodial attendance of persons in the  
2 physical custody of a law enforcement agency.

3     (4) The provision of bailiff or other security services to a court  
4 of law.

5     (5) The collection or attempted collection of debts by telephone  
6 or written solicitation after the debtor has been located.

7     (6) The repossession or attempted repossession of personal  
8 property after that property has been located and identified.

9     (d) Where the activities of employment of an applicant include  
10 those which qualify as bona fide experience as stated in this section  
11 as well as those which do not qualify, the director may, by  
12 delegation to the bureau, determine and apportion that percentage  
13 of experience for which any applicant is entitled to credit.

O